ABSTRACT
        This booklet is a simplified guide for program
planning and is intended to complement a somewhat lengthier companion
booklet on program evaluation. It spells out in outline fashion the
basic elements and steps involved in the planning process. Brief
sections focus in turn on different phases of the planning process,
including problem identification, program goals and objectives,
program strategy, program implementation, program monitoring, program
evaluation, and budget preparation. (Author/JG)

A Guide To Program

Planning

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

This booklet is designed to serve as a simplified guide for PROGRAM PLANNING. It seeks to spell out in outline fashion, the basic elements involved in the "planning process" and the basic steps to be taken in going through this process.

In an effort to achieve as much clarity as possible, a working definition of PROGRAM PLANNING, as it is used herein, is stated below.

1. PROGRAM — A program is defined as any organized or structure effort, undertaken by one or more persons, designed to accomplish a desired end within a specified time period.

2. PLANNING — Planning is defined as that ongoing activity engaged in by any person(s) who attempts to develop a systematic course of action to be followed in order to accomplish a desired end.

These two working definitions will serve as the basis of the discussion that follows. Hopefully, what follows will provide the reader with a stable launching pad from which to conduct the kind of planning that will result in programs that can and will be effectively carried out. A brief description of each of the basic elements in the planning process is presented below.

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2.0   PROBLEM IDENTIFICATION

One of the first things to be considered is development of an answer to the question, why is the PROGRAM needed? This question is designed to get at the issue of problem(s) identification. What problems will this PROGRAM attempt to solve and/or prevent? In answering this question, it is extremely important to be realistic and as specific as possible. Although the problem(s) identified may be related to a much broader problem (i.e. poor housing throughout the inner city of Houston), in describing the problem, only that segment with which the PROGRAM will actually deal should be stated. For example, Project A identified poor housing as the problem with which it will be concerned. However, in stating the problem, Project A describes the poor housing as it exist within a specific inner city area—the Fourth Ward section of Houston. Include in this description are such factors as the number of poor housing units, the availability and number of "good" housing in the area; the income of the people living in this area; and the existance of any low-income housing in the area. A description of the problem that included such specifics as these provides a good basis for determining whether or not there is a need for Project A in the Fourth Ward area. It also serves as a basis in determining what kinds of goals and objectives that should be set for Project A.

2.1   Program Goals and Objectives

In planning for any program, one of the most important first steps is the setting of objectives. This involves stating as clearly as possible what the program intends to accomplish. However, in stating the program objectives, this should not be confused with the statement of program goals. Although the two are related, there is a basic difference. Generally speaking, program goals are the broad areas about which the program is concerned, (an example of a program goal would be to increase the availability of low-income housing). To state this broad goal as an objective, however, requires making some specific statement about what a particular program will do about low-income housing and to what extent will it be done. For example, if one of the goals of Project A is to become actively involved in providing low-income housing in the Fourth Ward area of Houston; this goal can be formulated into specific objectives which state:

1. "Project A will construct 125 low-income housing units in the Fourth Ward section of the city within the next 2 years with Federal grants."

2. "Project A will rehabilitate 100 housing units in the Fourth Ward section within the next two years."

Once the objectives are stated in this fashion, Project A is in a much better position to deal with the variety of specifics effective planning requires. Thus in setting program objectives, it is important to keep at least three things in mind:

1. The objectives should be related to one or more of the program goals.

2. The objectives should state as specifically as possible what the program intends to do in order to accomplish the program goals.

3. The objectives should be stated in some measurable terms, i.e. numbers, times, money, people, etc.

In the absence of clearly defined and clearly stated objectives, none of the other steps in the planning process can be performed with any degree of effectiveness.

2.2 Program Strategy

Once the program objectives have been clearly defined and clearly formulated, the next important step is to determine how the program will go about accomplishing these objectives. At this point, the concern is to consider several possible approaches and then decide on the most practical one. This is a very important activity. Failure to consider the various possibilities available could well mean that the program will be un- successful in achieving one or more of its objectives. Consequently, extreme care should be taken when developing a program strategy. Consideration should be given to a number of factors, chief among which is the availability of the necessary resources. If, for example, Project A develops a strategy that fails to take into consideration the fact that there is an 18 to 24 month freeze on all low-income housing projects, and therefore, the local FHA office is not accepting any more applications, because it already has a backlog, it obviously cannot achieve this particular program objective within the desired time frame, if at all. If, however, in developing the strategy, Project A had considered several al- ternative sources for acquiring the necessary resources, and had determined that these were available, if needed, in all likelihood this project would experience no delay in achieving its objective. Therefore, in developing a program strategy, several of the more important factors to be considered are:

1. What resources are necessary, and are these available?

2. What are the various sources of possible funding?

3. What are the specific requirements for each funding source, (i.e.) matching costs,non-profit status, tax exempt numbers, etc.?

4. If necessary resources are not available, should achievement of a particular program objective be attempted?

5. What other measures, if any, can be taken to achieve a particular program objective?

There are, to be sure, other factors to be considered and effective program planning requires that they be considered. However, careful consideration of these will suggest others that must be considered before leaving this important phase of the planning process.

2.3 Program Implementation

Having developed and selected a program strategy, the next step is to decide how the selected strategy will be carried out. What will the events be that must occur in order to achieve the objective(s). This phase of the planning process, which is called program implementation, is the point at which the specific tasks that will be performed by the program staff are spelled out. As was true for the other phases, this one requires a great deal of consideration. It is necessary to be extremely specific as to what will be done, how it will be done, and by whom. There are several ways by which the planning of the implementation phase can be conducted. Generally speaking, however, this can best be accomplished by thinking in terms of the various tasks that have to be performed in order to carry out a particular strategy. These tasks should be listed in the order in which the events must occur. There must be some indication relative to the estimated time required to complete the task. For example, one of the objectives of Project A is to provide 125 units of low-income housing in the Fourth Ward section of the city. The strategy selected by Project A called for the accomplishment of several major tasks, among these are:

1. Preparation and submission of an application to FHA to secure necessary funding.

2. Selecting and securing the site on which the units will be erected.

3. Establishing a special housing committee.

The accomplishment of these tasks is essential in order for Project A to make the necessary progress toward the achievement of one of its program objectives. Thus, the completion of these major tasks should be among the "milestones" that are established for Project A. In this context, milestones are series of major tasks that are accomplished in order to achieve a particular program objective. That is, "milestones" are indicators that significant progress is being made toward the achievement of an objective.

In identifying major tasks to be accomplished, it is also necessary to give careful consideration to the various steps that must be taken in order to complete these tasks. In this regard, Project A must consider the following:

1. The order in which the major tasks are to be accomplished.

2. How, when and by whom will the application to FHA be prepared?

3. How, when, and by whom will the site be selected and secured?

4. How, and when will the special housing committee be established, and who will serve on this committee?

These are just several of the steps that must be taken in order to accomplish certain major tasks related to achieving one of Project A's objectives. They represent, however, a major part of Project A's program implementation. In effect, the way Project A describes how it intends to perform these tasks, constitutes its program implementation. Not only does this description tell what Project A will do, it also tells how it will be done and by whom. One way of showing this graphically is the use of a Gantt Chart which is often used as a management tool. (See Exhibit A)

2.4   Program Monitoring

Effective PROGRAM PLANNING requires that provisions be made whereby periodic checks can be made to determine what a program is doing once it begins operation, and to what extent activities compare with what was planned. This process is called program monitoring. In establishing an effective monitoring system it is necessary that measurable "milestones" are clearly identified and specific procedures established for determining when these milestones have been accomplished or the progress made toward the accomplishment of these "milestones." Again, using Project A as an example, in planning a monitoring system for

this project, a measurable milestone that could be identified would be, completion of the preparation of the application to be submitted to FHA within a prescribed time limit. In developing the monitoring system, provisions should be made to determine if the preparation is proceeding according to schedule and, if not, what should be done to correct whatever is responsible for the delay.

Program monitoring is an extremely important activity, because often the success or failure of a program can be determined long in advance, if proper measures are taken, or not taken, during the planning process to insure that corrective steps can and will be taken as a function of monitoring at the time and to the degree necessary.

2.5   Program Evaluation

A significant phase of the planning process is the development of specific procedures for determining how well the Program did in terms of achieving its stated objectives. This process is called program evaluation. No planning process is complete without provisions being made for the evaluation of a program, both at its completion and at some reasonable intervals during its operation. Whatever the case, it should be clearly determined, during the planning phase, what criteria will be used for the program evaluation, how it will be conducted and by whom. In making these determinations, measurable "performance indicators" should be clearly identified. In the case of Project A, this would mean identifying those factors that will indicate the extent to which a particular program objective is achieved. One such "performance indicator" would be, whether or not Project A actually was successful in erecting 125 low-income housing units in the Fourth Ward area, and, if so, were these units erected within the proposed time schedule. In evaluating Project A this obviously would be the best indicator of total objective achievement. However Project A may not achieve this particular objective at the time it is evaluated. Consequently, other "performance indicators" relative to this particular objective should also be identified. These should include such things as the number of units that were actually constructed, if any; what progress was made, if any, in reaching the milestones that were established; and to what extent did the program operate within the established time frame.

The evaluation might also consider such factors as what impact did the program have on the area in which it was conducted; how did the people in the area relate and react to the program; was the program responsible for motivating others to do something about the housing situation in the area.

In planning for the evaluation of a program it is important to view this phase of the process in proper perspective. Often, program evaluation is seen as a "necessary

evil," and not as the effective tool that it should be. In addition to indicating what a program has done and/or not done, a "good" evaluation instrument should also indicate why a program was not able to do certain things. For example, if Project A was unable to achieve its objectives of erecting 5 units, 125 units because mid-way during the implementation of the program FHA put a freeze on all funding. This represents an unanticipated external event which could not be anticipated--particularly since tentative approval had been granted on the application. This and similar factors should be considered at time the program is evaluated and would have a major bearing on determining the success or failure of the program.

2.6   Budget Preparation

Preparation of a program budget is by far, one of the major functions involved in PROGRAM PLANNING. Without an adequately planned and developed budget, no program can be expected to achieve its objectives, no matter how well the other phases of the planning process have been performed. Therefore, some attention will now be given to this most important function.

Simply stated, a budget tells you how much money will be spent, how and for what it will be spent, and the time within which it will be spent. In the case of Project A, its budget would indicate the following:

1. The number and kind of personnel needed in order to achieve all of its program objectives and how much will this personnel cost. (This represents the salaries and wages category in the budget, and generally is broken down in terms of professional, consultants and clerical personnel).

2. Whether or not Project A will provide employee benefits and, if so, at what percentage rate. (This would include FICA, Health Insurance, etc.)

3. What will be the nature of Project A's operation, including such things as staff travel, equipment, contractual services, supplies, printing, etc., and how much each of those items will cost.

4. Any cost incurred by Project A in conducting its program, but is not directly related, such as administrative cost over and above the direct administration of the program. This is considered indirect cost. (Generally, this happens when a project is conducting more than one program and it is necessary for

there to be some involvement of the Project's personnel and resources in
the conducting of a particular program.)

In preparing a budget it is essential that each item included in the budget is
shown to be directly related to the actual performance of the various tasks required in
order to achieve the program objectives. This can be accomplished by preparing
a <u>budget justification</u>, which spells out in detail how each item relates and the basis
for the cost involved. Using Project A as an example, a sample budget and budget justi-
fication have been prepared. (See Exhibit B & C)

3.0   CONCLUSION

Although PROGRAM PLANNING involves a number of distinct steps, these should be viewed collectively. The omission of any of these steps will severely affect the out-come of the planning process. If each of these steps is given ample consideration there is every likelihood that the planning process will result in there being a well thought-out and adequately planned course of action to be followed, irrespective of the desired end to which this action is directed.

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Gantt Chart: An Explanation

Column One   A brief statement indicating each major task to be performed is
                                    written in this column.

Column Two   The name or position of the person(s) who is responsible for per-
                                    forming each major task is written in this column.

Column Three   The estimated number of months required to perform each major task
                                    is written in this column.

Column Four   The estimated starting date and ending date of each major task is
                                    written in this column.

Column Five   The results of a task having been completed is written in this
                                    column.

Column Six   The estimated amount of money it will take to complete each major
                                    task is written in this column.

Column Seven   A brief statement indicating for what the money will be used is
                                    written in this column.

Column Eight   The source form which the money comes is written in this column.

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EXHIBIT A

1	**2**	**3**											**4**	**5**	**6**

WORK TASKS	TASK RESP.	WORK SCHEDULE (MONTHS)											Dates	Performance Indicators	Costs	Utilization	Source
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	9	10	11	12					
1. Preparation and submission of an application to FHA	Director, Housing Specialist, Consultant, Secretary.												1-1-74 3-31-74	Finished Application submitted to FHA	$4050	Salaries, Consultants, supplies	Local funds
2. Selecting and acquiring the sites	Director Housing Specialist.												2-1-74 3-31-74	Acquisition of site.	.1625	Salaries and earnest money	Local funds
3.																	
4.																	
5.																	

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EXHIBIT B

PROJECT A

Proposed Budget
1974

A. Direct Cost

    1. Salaries and wages

        a. Professional

1	Program Director	$ 15,000
1	Housing Specialist	12,000
1	Community Relations Specialist	10,000
	Subtotal	$ 37,000

        b. Consultants   50 days @ $100 per day
            & Contract
            Services   30,000

        c. Clerical

1	Secretary	6,000
	Subtotal	6,000

    2. Employee Benefits @12   5,160

    3. Operating Cost

        a. Travel

            (1) In town travel for staff, 50 miles   1,152
                 per week @ .16¢ per mile x 3 staff
                 x 48 weeks

        b. Equipment (purchase, rental, repair)

            (1) IBM typewriter - 1 @ $600   600

(2)	File Cabinets - 2 @ $100	200
(3)	Calculator - 1 @ $300	300
(4)	Miscellaneous equipment	1,000

Subtotal   4,406

c. Contractual Service

(1) Rental of Program Office facilities   1,200
2,000 sq. ft. @ .60¢ sq. ft. (in-
cluding utilities)

Subtotal   1,200

d. Other

(1)	Consumable supplies and materials	1,200
(2)	Telephone services @ $50 per month x 12	600
(3)	Earnest Money	500
(4)	Legal Fees	500
(5)	Construction cost - including land acquisition and architectural services for 125 units and rehabilitation of 100 units	2,250,000

Subtotal   2,252,300

4. Total Direct Cost   2,312,218

B. Indirect Cost   -0-

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EXHIBIT C

BUDGET JUSTIFICATION

A. Salaries

　1. Professional　　　　　　　　　　Based on prevailing rates for similar positions in the Houston area.

　2. Secretary　　　　　　　　　　　Based on prevailing rates for similar positions in the Houston area.

B. Job Responsibilities

　1. Program Director　　　　　　　Major responsibility for all program activities and operations.

　2. Housing Specialist　　　　　　Major responsibility for planning and development housing program and site selection.

　3. Community Relations
　　　Selection　　　　　　　　　　　Major responsibility for coordinating community involvement activities and developing Housing Committee.

　4. Secretary　　　　　　　　　　　Perform general secretarial duties.